



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

**GOVERNOR MALLOY HONORS LABOR DAY WITH GRANT
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ONE OF A KIND ART PROJECT**

*American Mural Project Honors Working Men and Women, Will Generate Tourism
and Economic Activity*

(WINSTED) —In advance of Labor Day Weekend, Governor Dannel P. Malloy, joined by Congressman John Larson, state and local officials, American Mural Project (AMP) founder Ellen Griesedieck and Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Deputy Commissioner Kip Bergstrom, today announced the awarding of a one million dollar challenge grant in support of the American Mural Project, a tribute to American workers depicting people in professions that helped build the United States of America. AMP must raise \$1.4 Million before August 31, 2015 to earn the state's contribution.

"As we head into Labor Day Weekend, I'm glad to announce that the state will support an ambitious, impressive, and unique work of art that pays a fitting tribute to our hard working middle class and the generations of American workers who built this country," said Governor Malloy. "We are excited to commit our support to such a worthy project and help ensure the largest indoor collaborative artwork in the world is installed right here in Connecticut which, in turn, will have a profound impact on revitalizing the Winsted and the surrounding community through new tourism and increased economic activity."

AMP plans to raise the additional capital campaign funds from individuals, corporations, and foundations to meet the challenge. AMP owns two mill buildings, one of which will house the mural, and construction will commence upon completion of the fundraising and receipt of the state's grant. The mural will be installed adjacent to a beehive of artists and artisans in the former Whiting Mill complex in close proximity to Winsted's downtown area and the Winchester Historical Society museum.

"The state of Connecticut's challenge grant will be decisive to AMP not only because of the funding itself, but because it demonstrates that Connecticut sees the value that this installation brings to revitalizing the surrounding community through tourism and economic activity, and that brings philanthropic donations in," said Griesedieck.

Extensive cleanup of the property was made possible through a Federal Brownfields grant, allowing for the next three phases of renovation to occur. The State funds will be used for the first phase, which includes raising the roof thirty feet to allow for the installation of the nearly five-story mural, and will enable the museum and education center to open to the public. The two subsequent phases involve renovation of the second mill building for use as a visitors' center and development of the three surrounding acres of grounds for outdoor use.

"I thank Governor Malloy for his support of the American Mural Project and applaud Ellen and the thousands of children across the country who have created this tribute to our workers, our manufacturing industry and others," said Congressman Larson (CT-1). "I look forward to following its continued impact in our communities for years to come."

"The American Mural Project has the potential to bring countless visitors to Winsted, which will be a benefit to the local economy," said State Senator Clark Chapin (R-30). "I'm optimistic that AMP will be successful in raising the majority of the funding, so that they may take advantage of the State's challenge grant."

"Winsted is the epicenter of a thriving arts community in northwest Connecticut," said State Rep. Jay Case (R-63). "The American Mural Project is a tribute to that community, as well as the many men and women who made this country great. I'm excited for what this project will mean for both current and future residents of our town."

The American Mural Project has garnered support from elected officials, celebrities, and philanthropists, and has raised more than \$3.2 million to date. Now nearly complete, three-dimensional mural – at 120 feet long, 48 feet high, and up to ten feet deep – will be the largest indoor collaborative artwork in the world. The mural is constructed with various materials, including honeycomb aluminum, blown glass, clay, reclaimed wood, native indigo, and spackle, among others.

"The American Mural Project will anchor the Winsted visitor experience, and is a great example of DECD's larger strategy of making catalytic investments in art and history that combine to dramatically leverage other existing assets in our great places," said Deputy Commissioner Bergstrom. "The American Mural Project will create a major destination anchor that will build upon and link these other existing assets."

More than 10,000 children and adults from across the country have helped create sections of the mural, and an additional 30,000 from all 50 states are expected to help finish the project. A multi-subject curriculum based on their involvement is already in use. The lesson plans, which involve art as a way into history, geography, math, social studies, and American culture, are catalysts for getting participants to become physically involved with learning, to create projects beyond textbook knowledge, and to consider new opportunities of their own.

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